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ACTION EA 19

INFO GPM 03, SC 01, RSC 01, USIA 12, H 02, NSC 10, NSAE 00, L 03, INR 07, P 0

CIA 04, DOD 01, SP 02, SS 35, RSR 01, /105 W

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
REVIEWED BY Ivan Igelberg DATE 12/23/81
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PA or FOI EXEMPTIONS

R 280900Z AUG 67
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5483
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK 3953
CINCPAC
AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE 2292
AMCONSUL DANANG 0815

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 04233

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

REF: A-114

SUBJ: PRE-ELECTION POLITICS IN GO CONG PROVINCE

1. DURING VIST TO GO CONG PROVINCE AUG 24-26 EMBOFF HEARD AGIAN MANY OF THE ALLEGATIONS OF STRONG PRESSURE BY PROVINCE OFFICIALS DESIGNED TO INSURE A THIEU/KY VICTORY WHICH HE AHD HEARD FURING PREVIOUS VISIT (REF AIRGRAM), PLUS SOME NEW ONES. MAIN CHARGE (REPEATED BY PROVINCE DEPUTY CHIEF OF ADMINISTRATION CAO VAN BAY AND LOCAL CAMPAIGN REPRESENTATIVES OF HUONG AND HIEP), IS THAT NGUYEN THIEN NHON, MEMBER OF PEOPLE'S ARMY COUNCIL,

(1)

PAGE 2 RUMJIR 4233 C O N F I D E N T I A L
NATIONAL ASSEMBLY DEPUTY AND FORMER MEMBER OF G
A DINH
PROVINCIAL COUNCIL, HAS ORGANIZED A "SECRET OFFICE" IN GO CONG

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TO RUN THE THIEU/KY CAMPAIGN, AND THAT HIS PRINCIPAL INSTRUMENT IS THE PROVINCE CHIEF, LT COL. XUAN.

2. MOST SERIOUS CHARGE IS MADE BY HUONG'S REPRESENTATIVE NGUYEN HUU LAP, WHO CALIMS THAT HIS LIFE IS IN DANGER. LAP SAYS THAT ON TWO OCCASIONS, AUG 14 AND 18, HIS HOUSE WAS VISITED. ONCE BY FRIENDS WHO WORK IN PROVINCE HEADQUARTERS WHO WARNED LAP'S WIFE THAT IF HE DID NOT STOP COMPAIGNING FOR HUONG, HE MIGHT BE KILLED AND THE MURDER BLAMED ON THE VIET CONG. ON THE OTHER OCCASION, LAP SAID, AN UNKNOW SOLDIER HAD COME TO HIS HOME AND TOLD A YOUNG BOY WHO WORKS FOR THE FAMILY THAT LAP HAD BETTER STOP WORKING SO HARD FOR HUONG OR HE MIGHT BE ASSASSINATED. LAP CLAIMS HE IS CAMPAIGNING AS USUAL AND MERELY SEES TO IT THAT PEOPLE DO NOT KNOW WHERE HE IS GOING IN ADVANCE.

3. COL XUAN HAS ALLEGEDLY ORDERED HIS PROVINCIAL STAFF AND

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DISTRICT CHIEFS TO PUSH THE THIEU/KY SLATE. BAY CLAIMS THAT LAST MONTH COL XUAN CALLED ALL THE PROVINICAL SERVICE CHIEFS TOGETHER IN BAY'S OFFICE AND FLATLY TOLD THEM THEY HAD TO SUPPORT THE GVN SLATE. WHEN QUESTIONED WHY XUAN WOULD HOLD SUCH A MEETING IN BAY'S OFFICE, SINCE BAY DISLIKES THE PROVINCE CHIEF AND SUPPORTS HUONG (SEE REFERENCE), BAY SAID THE PROVINCE CHIEF IS UNAWARE OF HIS SENTIMENTS. "IF HE WERE", SAYS BAY, "HE WOULD FIRE ME".

4. PROVINCE CHIEF IS ALSO SAID TO BE TAKING OTHER STEPS TO INSURE PROVINCE OFFICIALS GO ALL OUT FOR GVN SLATE. TWO DISTRICT VIS WORKERS HAVE RECEN
B BEENCFEMOVED -- THE PROVINCE
CHIEF SAYS IT WAS BECAUSE THEY WERE USING THEIR POSITIONS TO CAMPAIGN FORSOUTHERN VNQDD CANDIDATE NGUYEN HOA HIEP. BAY SAYS IT IS BECAUSE THEY ARE MERELY MEMBERS OF THAT PARTY. TRAN VAN HUONG'S REPRESENTATIVE IN GO CONG, LAP, AND HIEP'S REPRESENTATIVE BOTH CLAIM THAT THEIR WORKERS IN THE DISTRICTS ARE BEING FOLOWED AND THREATENED WITH UNSPECIFIED BUT DIRE FATES IF THEY CONTINUE THEIR ACTIVITIES. THE REPRESENTATIVES OF HUONG AND HIEP BOTH CITED THE INSTANCE OF A

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LIEUTENANT [illegible] TRANSFERRED MERELY BECAUSE HE WAS A FRIEND OF LAP. THE REVOLUTIONARY DEVELOPMENT SERVICE CHIEF HAS TOLD A MEMBER OF THE AMERICAN ADVISORY TEAM THAT WATER THE LAST WEEKTWO RO [illegible] HAD BEEN ACCUSED BY A DISTRICT CHIEF

PAGE [illegible]
WHERE THE [illegible] FOR HIEP. [illegible] INTENDED TO ARREST THEM. WHICH [illegible] AWOL. THEY WERE SUBSEQUENTLY [illegible] INTO THE ARMY. ACCORDING TO [illegible] THIEU BAY CLAIMS THE EDUCATION [illegible] TWO OR THREE TIMES BY THE PROVRA [illegible] THE PROVINCE CHIEF KNOWS THAT THE SERVICE CHIEF SUPPORTS HUONG.

5. BAC LIEU. HOWEVER A REPRESENTATIVE SAY THATPOSTERS OF THE CIVILIAN CANDIDATES ARE DESTROYED OR DEFACED WHILE THOSE OF THIEU AND KY ARE SELDOM TOUCHED. (THE REPORTING OFFICER SAW INDICATIONS THAT THIS IS TRUE.) HIEP'S REPRESENTATIVE POINTED OUT, HOWEVER, THAT NO ONE HAS SEEN THIEU/KY MEN DOING THIS, AND VANDALS COULD BE RESPONSIBLE. LAP ALSO SAID THAT WHILE CAMPAIGN RALLIES ARE PERMITTED IN DISTRICT EEENS#
THIEU/KY
[illegible] VEHICLES TO CAMPAIGN CONSTANTLY, WHILE THE REPRESENTATIVE [illegible] CIVILIAN CANDIDATES MUST USETHEIR OWN TRANSPORTATION. LAP SAID FURTHER THAT BOTH BEFORE AND AFTER POLITICAL RALLIES DISTRICT OFFICIALS, USING THE PRTEXT

PAGE 5 NUMBER [illegible] C O N F I D E N T I A L
OF SHOWING PEOPLE HOW TO VOTE, TELL LOCAL RESIDENTS THEY "SHOULD VOTE FOR THE PEOPLE PRESENTLY IN POWER".

6. COMMENT: WHILE THESE ALLEGATIONS OF IRREGULARITIES AND PRESSURE IN CO CONG ARE THE MOST DETAILED WE HAVE HEARD, THESE CHARGES ARE STILL [illegible] HEARSAY. IT IS UNCLEAR WHY THIEU AND KY SHOULD CONCENTRATE SO MUCH EFFORT ON A PROVINCE THAT HAS LESS THAN

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40,000 DOLLARS, BUT WE DO KNOW THAT NHON HAS BEEN CHARGED TO SOME DEGREE WITH OVERSEEING THE THIEU/KY CAMPAIGN IN SOME PARTS OF [illegible] CORPS. THE PROVINCE CHIEF IS AN ERRATIC PERSON AND EVEN WITHOUT THE PRESENCE OF NHON IT WOULD BE EASY TO CONCEIVE OF HIM ACTING IN THIS WAY ON HIS OWN INITIATIVE. ALTHOUGH THOSE MAKING THESE CHARGES HAVE REASON TO THINK THEY MAY SOMEHOW BENEFIT FROM OUR HEARING THEM, IT IS POSSIBLE THAT THE ALLEGATIONS ARE TRUE. WE WILL INDICATE DISCREETLY OUR HOPE THESE REPORTS ARE NOT TRUE. IN ANY EVENT, WE HAVE HEARD NO REPRESENTATIVES OF THE CIVILIAN CANDIDATES IN OTHER [illegible] PROVINCES SAY THAT ALTHOUGH THEY FEAR WHAT MAY HAPPEN AS THE ELECTION APPROACHES, SO FAR THEY HAVE NO COMPLAINTS.

GP-3
BUNKER

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